



SB411/HB624  
Safe Staffing Act of 2026  
Position: **FAV**

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kim Jones. I've worked at a hospital in Baltimore for 39 years in the kitchen and cafe. When we are short staffed, patients don't get their food on time. I urge a **favorable** report on the Safe Staffing Act. Workers deserve a voice, especially in underrepresented departments like food service that serve a critical role in patient wellbeing.

My department has had six staffing vacancies for years, and when workers call out, we have to work 2-3 jobs to cover the gap. Many of us frequently work overtime, from 6am to 9pm, multiple days in a row to make up for not having enough workers. Chronic overworking leads to exhaustion and burnout. People are more likely to make mistakes when they are tired, and those mistakes can be really dangerous in kitchens where knives and open flames are part of our day to day work. The stress of being overworked also contributes to a hostile work environment as people tend to be more irritable when they're exhausted. Many of the women workers in particular experience verbal abuse in the kitchen.

**Workers are dismissed by management when we bring up our concerns about short staffing and our ideas on how to fix it.** One issue I brought up is that we are required to do rotating schedules, meaning sometimes we work day shift and sometimes we work night shift. Workers struggle with that amount of inconsistency, and there are more callouts because of it. So we shared with management that if our shift schedules were consistent, it would be easier for the kitchen to be staffed, and we were ignored.

We need the Safe Staffing Act because working conditions and patient care will be better when workers input is valued instead of disregarded. It will feel marvelous and fantastic to be a member of a safe staffing committee. Please vote YES on this bill. Thank you.

In Unity, Kim Jones